



BEST BUY DRUGS

Free Guidance for Consumers on Prescription Medicines



NEWS UPDATE

ConsumerReportsHealth.org/BestBuyDrugs

Keep High Blood Pressure Well-Controlled With Low-Cost Generics

High blood pressure is a leading cause of death, and often called a "silent killer" since its symptoms can go undetected until damage to the body has already occurred. Because of this, it is one of the most significantly under-diagnosed and under-treated medical conditions in the U.S. If left uncontrolled, it can raise your risk of heart attack, heart failure, stroke, dementia, vision loss, and kidney failure.

Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs has just published its [updated analysis of drugs to treat high blood pressure](#), evaluating three classes of medications: [Beta-Blockers](#), [Calcium-Channel Blockers](#) and [ACE Inhibitors](#). The Best Buys selected for each drug class - besides being the safest and most effective drugs - can also save you hundreds or even thousands of dollars a year compared to more expensive brand-name drugs.

ACE Inhibitors

We have selected the following five ACE Inhibitors as *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* based on the evidence for their effectiveness, dosing convenience and cost in treating the following conditions:

- For high blood pressure - *benazepril*, *enalapril*, and *lisinopril*
- For heart failure - *enalapril* and *captopril*
- After a heart attack - *lisinopril*
- For diabetics - *ramipril*
- For people with kidney disease - *benazepril*, and *ramipril*

Beta-Blockers

Taking effectiveness, safety and cost into account, we have selected the following beta-blockers, at all appropriate doses, as *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs*:

- For high blood pressure - *atenolol*, *metoprolol tartrate*, *nadolol*, and *propranolol*
- For angina - *atenolol*, *metoprolol tartrate*, *nadolol*, and *propranolol*
- After a heart attack - *atenolol*, *metoprolol tartrate*, and *propranolol*
- For mild heart failure - *bisoprolol*, *carvedilol*, and *metoprolol succinate*
- For severe heart failure - *carvedilol*

Calcium-Channel Blockers

We have chosen the following four calcium-channel blockers as *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* based on the evidence of their effectiveness, dosing convenience and their cost in treating the following conditions:

- For high blood pressure - *Diltiazem CR*, *Diltiazem SR*, *Felodipine SR*, *Nifedipine SR*, and *Verapamil SR*
- For angina - *Nifedipine SR*
- For heart rhythm abnormalities - *Diltiazem CR*, *Diltiazem SR*, and *Verapamil SR*

High blood pressure - the force exerted upon the wall of the arteries when blood is pumped out of

the heart - is defined, for adults, as having a systolic pressure (when the heart contracts) of 140 mm Hg or greater and/or a diastolic pressure (when the heart is at rest) of 90 mm Hg or greater. Normal blood pressure is defined as a systolic reading of less than 120 mm Hg and a diastolic reading of less than 80 mm Hg.

You should have your blood pressure checked frequently - at least once a year, more often if you are over age 50, and every time you visit a doctor no matter what your age.

High blood pressure can occur at any age but is far more common in people age 35 and over. It is particularly prevalent in African-Americans, those with a family history of high blood pressure, people who are overweight or obese, people with diabetes, and heavy drinkers. Women taking birth control pills are also at high risk, as are people who take nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs -- such as ibuprofen, naproxen, and celecoxib (Celebrex)- over long periods.

Read the rest of the *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* [reports on treating high blood pressure](#), for more on specific symptoms, diagnosis, medication dosages and formulations, drug side effect and safety information.

For additional information on more than 200 prescription drugs, alternatives to high-priced drugs and *Best Buy* selections for the most common, chronic medical conditions, visit ConsumerReportsHealth.org/BestBuyDrugs.